

# PRITCHARD

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE  
EASTERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

JONATHAN YORK,  
TOMMY MORRIS, and

Defendants.

CASE NO. 1:19 CR 10138-STA/jay

18 U.S.C. § 242  
18 U.S.C. § 371  
18 U.S.C. § 1512(b)(3)  
18 U.S.C. §§ 1519 & 2

## INDICTMENT

### THE GRAND JURY CHARGES:

#### INTRODUCTION

1. At all times relevant to this indictment, the Northwest Correctional Complex ("NWCX") in Tiptonville, Tennessee, was a Tennessee Department of Corrections ("TDOC") facility that housed inmates.
2. NWCX contains a dedicated housing unit for inmates diagnosed with mental health disorders; this housing unit is commonly known as Unit 5.
3. On or about February 1, 2019, Defendant **JONATHAN YORK** was a TDOC Correctional Officer working at NWCX.
4. On or about February 1, 2019, Defendant **TOMMY MORRIS** was a TDOC Corporal working at NWCX.

5. On or about February 1, 2019, R.T., a person known to the grand jury, was an inmate incarcerated at NWCX.
6. On or about February 1, 2019, R.T. was placed in a single-man seclusion cell which contained a surveillance camera that continuously recorded.
7. Paragraphs 1-6 are hereby incorporated by reference into the counts set forth below.

**COUNT ONE**

On or about the 1st day of February, 2019, in the Western District of Tennessee, the Defendant,

**JONATHAN YORK,**

while acting under color of law as a Correctional Officer at the Northwest Correctional Complex ("NWCX"), willfully deprived R.T., an inmate at NWCX, of the right, secured and protected by the Constitution and laws of the United States, to be free from cruel and unusual punishment by a person acting under color of law. Specifically, Defendant YORK repeatedly punched R.T. without legal justification, resulting in bodily injury to R.T.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 242.

**COUNT TWO**

On or about the 1st day of February, 2019, in the Western District of Tennessee,  
the Defendant,

**TOMMY MORRIS,**

while acting under color of law as a Corporal at the Northwest Correctional Complex ("NWCX"), willfully deprived R.T., an inmate at NWCX, of the right, secured and protected by the Constitution and laws of the United States, to be free from cruel and unusual punishment by a person acting under color of law. Specifically, MORRIS knew of an unjustified staff assault on R.T. and failed to intervene to stop the assault.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 242.

**COUNT THREE**

From on or about the 1st day of February, 2019, and continuing to on or about the 20th day of February, 2019, in the Western District of Tennessee, Defendants,

**JONATHAN YORK and  
TOMMY MORRIS,**

knowingly and willfully combined, confederated, conspired and agreed with each other and with others known and unknown to the grand jury, to commit the following offense against the United States, as charged in the remaining counts of the indictment and incorporated herein:

- a. knowingly engaged in misleading conduct toward another person with intent to hinder, delay, and prevent the communication of truthful information to a federal law enforcement officer and judge of information relating to the commission and possible commission of a federal offense, in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1512(b)(3).

**Plan and Purpose of the Conspiracy**

It was the plan and purpose of the conspiracy that defendants YORK and MORRIS, and other correctional officers, would provide false and misleading information about their interactions with R.T. and the cause of his injuries on February 1, 2019, in order to cover up that officers had used force on and injured R.T., and thereby shield the correctional officers from liability. It was further the plan and purpose of the conspiracy that defendants YORK and MORRIS, aided and abetted by each other and by other correctional officers, would cover up the use of force on inmate R.T. by failing to write reports and by covering the surveillance camera in R.T.'s cell.

**Overt Acts**

In furtherance of the conspiracy, and to effect the objects thereof, the members of the conspiracy committed one or more of the following overt acts, among others, in the Western District of Tennessee:

On or about February 1, 2019, defendant York instructed another correctional officer at NWCX to cover the surveillance camera in R.T.'s cell and, following this instruction, the officer used his hand and, later, a wet paper towel to cover the camera.

1. Immediately following the assault of inmate R.T. on or about February 1, 2019, defendants YORK and MORRIS, and other correctional officers, gathered outside of R.T.'s cell at NWCX and discussed the assault; defendants YORK and MORRIS directed other correctional officers to tell a false and misleading story about how R.T. suffered his injuries.
2. On or about February 1, 2019, after defendant MORRIS and another Correctional Officer walked out of Unit 5, MORRIS told the officer not to fill out any paperwork about the use of force on R.T.
3. On or about February 2, 2019, defendant YORK met a Correctional Officer for a meal and told the officer to falsely blame R.T.'s injuries on another Correctional Officer.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 371.

**COUNT FOUR**

On or about the 1st day of February, 2019, in the Western District of Tennessee,  
the Defendant,

**TOMMY MORRIS,**

knowingly corruptly persuaded other correctional officers, and attempted to do so, with the intent to hinder, delay, and prevent the communication to a federal law enforcement officer and federal judge of information relating to the commission and possible commission of the federal offense alleged in Count 1. Specifically, defendant MORRIS encouraged correctional officers to provide investigators with false and misleading information about the circumstances surrounding the injuries inmate R.T. had suffered while correctional officers were in his cell on February 1, 2019.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Section 1512(b)(3).

**COUNT FIVE**

On or about the 1st day of February, 2019, in the Western District of Tennessee,  
the Defendant,

**JONATHAN YORK,**

aided and abetted by others known and unknown to the grand jury, knowingly altered, destroyed, concealed, covered up, and falsified a record and tangible object in relation to and in contemplation of a matter within the jurisdiction of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, an agency of the United States, with the intent to impede, obstruct, and influence the investigation and proper administration of the matter within federal jurisdiction. Specifically, defendant YORK directed a Correctional Officer to cover the surveillance camera in R.T.'s cell in order to cover up the officers' assault on R.T., and the Correctional Officer followed defendant YORK's instructions by covering the camera while defendant York and other officers repeatedly punched R.T.

All in violation of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 1519 and 2.

A TRUE BILL:

\_\_\_\_\_  
FOREPERSON

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
D. MICHAEL DUNAVANT  
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY